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**American Research Center In Egypt, Inc.**

**NEWSLETTER**



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**NEWSLETTER NUMBER SEVENTY-FIVE**

**OCTOBER 1970**

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**Twenty Nassau St.  
Princeton, New Jersey 08540  
United States of America**

**No. 2 Kasr el Dubbara  
Garden City, Cairo  
United Arab Republic**

COLLÈGE DE FRANCE  
Cabinet d'Égyptologie  
Inventaire B ...10495.....

News of President Nasser's death has been received as the Newsletter goes to press.

The throng of two million Egyptians who lined the streets of Cairo to watch the funeral cortege pass on October 1 was an impressive tribute to a respected leader whose untimely death left a nation stunned and incredulous.



AMERICAN RESEARCH CENTER IN EGYPT  
INCORPORATED

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NO. 2 KASR EL DOUBARA  
GARDEN CITY, CAIRO  
UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC

NEWSLETTER NUMBER SEVENTY-FIVE

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MEMBERSHIP DUES: (Include Newsletter and Journal of ARCE)

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The editor invites commentary, to be considered for publication in future issues, on Newsletter contents.

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meetings of ARCE will be held at the Lord Simcoe Hotel in Toronto, Canada, on Friday and Saturday, November 13 and 14. Professor Ronald J. Williams will represent the University of Toronto, host. Following is the schedule for the meetings as prepared by Professor Donald B. Redford of the university.

Friday, November 13

|                             |      |      |            |
|-----------------------------|------|------|------------|
| Executive Committee meeting | 3    | P.M. | Room 341   |
| Registration                | 6-10 | P.M. | Main lobby |

Saturday November 14

|                             |        |      |                         |
|-----------------------------|--------|------|-------------------------|
| Registration                | 8- 9   | A.M. | Main lobby              |
| General Meeting             | 9-10   | A.M. | Salons A and B          |
| Papers                      | 10-12  | A.M. | Salons A and B          |
| Board of Governors Luncheon | 12- 2  | P.M. | Salon C                 |
| Papers                      | 2-4:30 | P.M. | Salons A and B          |
| Reception                   | 5- 7   | P.M. | Royal Ontario<br>Museum |

Papers to be Delivered at the Annual Meeting  
of the ARCE in Toronto, November 14, 1970

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MORNING

Islamic Section

Ernst J. Grube, "New Materials of Early Islamic Painting in Egypt."  
The Paper will deal with hitherto unpublished fragments of paintings, probably executed in Cairo in the pre-Fatimid and Fatimid periods.

Richard N. Verdery, "Two Arabic Manuscripts on 18th century Egypt."  
Two MSS from the Bibliotheque Nationale throw some new light on events in Egypt just before and during the Napoleonic expedition of 1798-1801.

Egyptian Section

Lanny Bell, "The third season of the University Museum's Expedition to Dra Abu-el-Naga, Thebes." (illustrated)

Gerald E. Kadish, "A New translation of BM 5654: the Complaint of Kha-kheper-re-senebu."

This paper is an attempt to solve some of the translation difficulties in this well-known, but comparatively little studied text. Gardiner's transcription has been compared with recent photographs of the British Museum writing board.

Elizabeth Riefstahl, "The Use of Fringes and Braids in Egyptian Dress of the Pharaonic Period."

Dieter Mueller, "The Objectives of Egyptian Expeditions to the Sinai."  
Expedition records only state the general purpose of these expeditions, and not the specific operations to be carried out. This affects the question which minerals were mined there.

Alan R. Schulman, "The new Ramesside Temple in the Negeb." (Illustrated).

William P. McHugh, "Chronology and Ecology in the Rock Art of Southwestern Egypt (Gilf Kebir and Jebel 'Uweinat)."

The now uninhabited Gilf Kebir and Jebel 'Uweinat of southwestern Egypt provides abundant evidence of prehistoric human occupation in the form of lithic, shell, and ceramic artifacts, settlements, stone circles and alignments, and, most impressive, rock paintings and engravings. This paper will present interpretations of the age of the rock pictures and will attempt to develop a model of the prehistoric environment on the basis of the fauna represented in the rock art and their modern distribution and ecological requirements.

M. Sadek, "Carbon 14 and Its Implication for the Early Chronology of Egypt."

#### AFTERNOON

##### Egyptian section (Art & Archaeology)

Winifred Needler, "A Fragment of Wall Painting from Tomb 181 at Thebes in the R.O.M." (Illustrated).  
Its place in the decoration of the tomb will be identified, and the recent history will be discussed of this and other pieces that disappeared during severe damage to Tomb 181 about 1940.

James E. Harris, "A Comparison of the Mummies of Nobles from Deir el-Bahari with Mummies from the Old Kingdom Giza Necropolis" (Illustrated)

Wm. Kelly Simpson, "Progress Report on the Abydene Offering Chapels." (Illustrated)  
A report on the progress of the study of the tomb chapels at Abydos North of Dynasties 12 and 13. The initial report of this project was presented at the 1969 meeting of the American Research Center in Egypt at the University of California at Berkeley. Some 65 chapels have now been identified.

David O'Connor, "The Scarabs from the Byblos 'Offering Deposit'." (Illustrated)  
A reconsideration of the evidence of these scarabs with respect to the chronological conclusions and the historical implications to be derived therefrom.

Mary Russell, "The Egyptian Temples at Beth Shean."

##### Egyptian Section (History & Religion)

Hans Goedicke, "And they Became Ashes."

Louis V. Zabkar, "Varia Sudanica." (Illustrated)  
The speaker will briefly comment on some photo-slides from his excavation at Semna South, and describe the transference and preservation of some temples of Sudanese Nubia.

Stanley H. Cath, "Ritual in Ancient Egypt."  
In this paper an attempt is made to describe and understand the ontogenetic development of the ritualization that can be found in any and all cultures. It becomes clear that the primary process of infantile magical thinking associated with unlimited omnipotence is often utilized by men in all societies as a common resource to confront the uncertainties of daily living, the unknown after death, and the ambivalences between unequal members of the same species. The problem of vulnerability to death, a universal threat, is focused upon as particularly conveyed to us by rituals surrounding one Pharaoh's death, as reflected in the pyramidal text of Unas. Some observations are made on the problems of transmission of culture through generations, including our own.

John D. Schmidt, "The Coregency of Seti I and Ramesses II."  
A discussion of the possible length of such a coregency especially with regard to the chronological ramifications which certain evidence indicates, affecting not only the length of the reign of Seti I but also that of Ramesses II.

Donald B. Redford, "Progress Report on a Study of the 23rd. Dyn. reliefs & inscriptions in the Temple of Osiris, Lord of Eternity, at Karnak." (Illustrated).

##### Acknowledgment of Research Funds

In Volume VII of the Journal of ARCE, the article entitled "The Plemochoe" by Edward L. Ochsenschlager should have included an acknowledgment to the Smithsonian Institution for funds which have supported the Mendes expedition for several years.

##### Fellowship Funds for 1971-72

The American Research Center in Egypt expects to have available from HEW (Office of Education) and Department of State, funds in Egyptian pounds from excess U.S. currencies to finance research grants in Egypt for all or part of the year 1971-72.

Applications and research projects will be evaluated by a panel of distinguished scholars. Individuals holding the bachelor's, master's, or higher degrees are invited to apply. Research financed through the ARCE Fellowship Program will be done in Cairo under the supervision of the Cairo Director of the American Research Center in Egypt. Appropriate subjects for research encompass a wide field of interest relating to Middle Eastern studies including such topics as population, science, etc.

Further information and application forms, may be obtained from the Princeton office.

Completed applications and letters of recommendation must be received no later than December 31, 1970.

#### Identity

We have received permission from the ARCE Fellow who so delightfully related his Musings in the last Newsletter to reveal that "A" (also author) was played by Bernard V. Bothmer and "P" by Professor Herman De Meulenaere of Brussels.

#### Wanted - student for research on General Gordon

Miss Mary H. Raitt has written that she and Dr. John Lydgate of Georgetown University History Department are working on an annotated edition of the family letters and biography of General Charles Gordon. Miss Raitt would like to "have the help of a responsible, shrewd researcher in Cairo who knows English and French, as well as Arabic, thoroughly. If he would go through the records, including correspondence in foreign languages, now open to the public and recently catalogued in a descriptive handbook published in Leiden, I would be glad to make what arrangements he wishes.

"My objective is quotations by Gordon that reveal his character and opinions rather than the details of his administration, information identifying and describing Egyptian and Sudanese assistants mentioned in his letters, and opinions about Gordon from others."

Any student who wishes further information from Miss Raitt should write to her directly at: Department of History, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. 20007.

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# MYRON BEMENT SMITH

1897 to 1970

Myron B. Smith, Near East architectural historian and scholar, was present at the organizational meeting of the American Research Center in Egypt in 1948, and served the corporation as a Trustee from 1962 to 1966. Dr. Smith saw ARCE from its inception as a vehicle of service to scholarship and the United States.

Four years (1933-37) in Persia directing an expedition for the study of Islamic architecture established his life-long devotion to the Near East.

During his thirty-year association with the Library of Congress as Honorary Consultant for Islamic Archaeology and Near Eastern History he had a prominent role in the establishment of the Near Eastern Section of the Library and in the development of its collections.

In these thirty years he built up an Islamic Archive of photographic documents numbering over 87,000 items which are privately held but accessible to scholars. Of this collection Dr. Gustave E. von Grunebaum writes "The true stature of this achievement will be realized only when the scholarly world will have utilized it more fully. As art historian in the field, advisor to government agencies, lecturer on many campuses, Myron Bement Smith filled a unique role in the community of Islamists which he stimulated by constant contact and a kind of constructive criticism quite peculiarly his own."

Of Dr. Smith, his widow, Mrs. Katherine D. Smith, says "In all phases of his life, Dr. Smith's generosity was outstanding. He was a sort of Don Quixote with a clear vision. He especially wanted to help young scholars of today and tomorrow."

Dr. Smith died in Washington of a heart attack on March 21, 1970.

RECENTLY PUBLISHED BY ARCE MEMBERS

Hans Goedicke, The Report about the Dispute of a Man with His Ba (Papyrus Berlin 3024) The Johns Hopkins Press, 192 pages, about \$6.50

The Egyptian Hieratic Papyrus Berlin 3024 contains one of the most interesting literary documents of the ancient world. Dating from the Twelfth Dynasty, this papyrus records a meditation in the form of a dialogue discussing such basic philosophical questions as the meaning of life on earth and the possibilities of life hereafter. The ba, an entity analagous to the Western concepts of soul or astral body, acts as devil's advocate in questioning the grounds of the subject's beliefs. This must surely be one of the earliest examples of the philosophical dialogue in the history of world literature.

Like Plato, the author of Berlin 3024 took the sublime view that knowledge is the highest good.

Dr. Goedicke's translation elucidates many of the philosophical ideas contained in the text. Also included are a hieroglyphic transcription, a philological commentary, and halftone illustrations of the papyrus.

Excerpts from

HOUSING AND SANITATION:

Some Aspects of Medieval Islamic Public Service

by George T. Scanlon

from The Islamic City, ed. A. H. Hourani and S. M. Steon (Oxford: 1970)

"Limited to considerations of religion and administration, a study of the cities within the Muslim world does present an appertainable aspect of unity, to such a degree that one may speak of the Islamic City. It is true that the Islamic city lacked internally evolved municipal institutions, on the one hand, and any fructifying sense of citizenship, on the other; but the appointment from on high of the qadi and the muhtasib and the identity of the scope of their work and powers throughout dar al-Islam does yield a 'patina' of administrative similarity.

"Too often our sense of the medieval Islamic city springs from a re-creation of its civic life from texts and memoirs, and we thus pass over significant differences in physical character and in the differing solutions to problems raised by such characteristics. These differences are within an overall unity, but they are important, for each city had, as it were, its own heat, odour, cries, tumult and motion through which it gained its distinction.

"We must attend distinctions in character which grow out of historical placement.

"Or if the city be an entirely new entity, it may evolve spontaneously, without recourse to plan or model, except for the advantageous positioning of the Friday mosque and the dar al-imara. The best models here are the pure Arab Islamic camp-capitals of Basra, Kufa, Fustat and Ifriqiya. Or the new city can be built along the lines of a preconceived model, best exemplified by the Abbasid capital, the round-city of Baghdad.

"A working typology of the great Islamic cities points to inherent differences: modes of building and services were inherited or adapted from the large conquered centres; others construed or evolved from purely Islamic experience and ethos, novel physical conditions, emergent temperament and taste. From a variety of such factors we should construct the physical profile of most cities, a profile which when complete should give the essential difference of each city. (The social profile should enhance but not contradict the purely physical one, for the social norms can more easily be imposed from above, but the physical truths of a city stem from the reverse.) Climate dictates much, the mode of laying streets for instance: stamped earth in Iraq and Persia, tamped earth and crushed stone in layers in Egypt and Syria, stone slabs and cobbles in northern Syria and throughout Anatolia, etc. It shapes the form of the congregational mosque; in some places it points to large, cavernous warehouses and khans while elsewhere it allows goods to lie in the open.

"No less important is terrain: Fustat was built on an undulant shelf of gabal, it had to store water from a river somewhat distant and in places in which dirt and rubbish could not be dumped; hence the need for civic rubbish-heaps and for the direction of possible expansion, for the river was too wide at flooding to consider anything but temporary pontoon-type bridges. Isfahan and Damascus were green-belt cities whose obedient rivers could keep the water flowing (and hopefully clean) along the main routes of the city, and the supply gardens were almost immediate to its gates. Ethnic and religious considerations prompted certain arrangements within one city which were quite different in another; economic feasibility and civic health were concomitant considerations placing industry and crafts within or without the city boundaries; finally, mores gave reasons for domestic arrangements, such that housing was always oriented away from the streets, doors seldom faced one another, for the citizen sought to maintain his privacy and achieve 'as complete a withdrawal from the public as possible'.

"Factors such as these worked for the ultimate disposition of the physical elements of the city, and consequently of the scope and disposition of the public services required to keep the islamic metropolis alive and in motion. The prime needs were housing and water, connected with the former was sanitation, and with the latter, storage. Sanitation required a system of intelligently spread and scrupulously maintained generous supplies of water to keep the city clean and some system of canalization or collection to remove wastes. Each city evolved its own systems, and the individual Muslim gave much thought and time to the need for personal cleanliness and the best mode to achieve it for his family. To the degree that he was willing to co-operate and achieve it for his fellow craftsmen

and/or guild-members, or for his 'quarter' we can see this Muslim inhabitant tending towards our concept of 'citizen'."

#### TORONTO'S NEW EGYPTOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities, whose offices are located at 30 Chestnut Park Road, Toronto 5, Ontario, has recently been established "to aid and stimulate interest in the study of Egyptian antiquities."

The Trustees of the new organization include Mr. G.E. Freeman, President: Professor R.J. Williams, Professor N.B. Millet, Professor Friedl Needler, Professor D. B. Redford, Miss S. Turner and Mr. F.T. Miosi.

The new Society is fortunate to have the patronage of the Hon. Leslie Frost, former Premier of Ontario, as well as the following persons, who are Honorary Trustees: Dr. Peter Swan, Director of the Royal Ontario Museum; Lt.-Col. C. Sydney Frost, Q.C.; Lt.-Col. R.H. Hilborn, M.B.E.; and Mr. Harry I. Price, Vice-President of the Canadian National Exhibition.

The Society is planning to organize a program of four or five lectures a year, to sponsor and organize expeditions and eventually to provide library facilities in the city. The Society is closely allied with both the University of Toronto and with the Museum. It is planned that these three organizations will cooperate fully in sponsoring expeditions.

#### THE CENTER FOR EGYPTIAN CIVILIZATION STUDIES

Nawal M. Hassan, Director

The Center for Egyptian Civilization Studies was founded in January, 1970, as a private, non-profit organization, under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture.

The reasons leading to the creation of yet another Center in Egyptian civilization will be related in this article.

As readers of the Newsletter know, there are a great many institutes in the UAR, both foreign and national, dealing with the archaeology of ancient Egypt, and several national institutes dealing with later phases of Egyptian culture, such as the Institute of Coptic Studies and the Center for Folk Art. These institutes are basically specialized in documentation and research and exist mainly to serve archaeological missions or independent research scholars. On the other hand, many non-specialists, and in this category I include university professors and students, are interested in having this knowledge made accessible to them through lectures, exhibitions, and particularly--by being able to see for themselves--what is being uncovered at excavation sites, what the Egyptian artist is painting in his atelier, and about the mechanics of the Arab League or other contemporary political and social institutions.

This desire to explore all aspects of Egyptian civilization was made evident to me on numerous occasions: when Mr. James Kline, Associate Director, Education Abroad Program, University of California, Santa Barbara, came to Cairo to explore the possibility of setting up an area program; when the Meadi community church members asked me to organize tours to ancient sites under the direction of a trained archaeologist; when the Ford Foundation asked me to plan an exhibition of contemporary Egyptian paintings for the reception planned in honor of Mr. McGeorge Bundy. It was following a meeting in September, 1969, with Dr. Richard Crabbs, Dean of Faculties, American University in Cairo, in which he asked me to organize a series of tours to Islamic monuments for AUC professors and fellows that I decided to found the Center.

The interest expressed by Americans and other foreigners in our Egyptian cultural heritage was not the only decisive factor leading to the creation of the Center. Many Egyptians are concerned that we have become overly westernized in our taste, that we disparage our native dress and traditions, have abandoned Arab architecture better suited to our climate, and fill our houses with gilded, French-style furniture. Dr. Hassan Fathy, who is the architect of the village of Gourni, built in the folk tradition, and who is on the Board of the Center, sums up our cultural crisis with the phrase, "nous sommes des Arabes Louis XV."

Thus one of the major objectives or *raison d'être* of the Center is to cultivate appreciation within the country for our heritage--through exhibitions, lectures, and publications.

I hope that the Center may eventually become a seat--a meeting place for scholars and individuals interested in the cultural heritage of the area and that this group will be articulate on the need to preserve and safeguard our monuments, unexcavated sites and existing folk culture when threatened by development projects.

The Center particularly welcomes closer collaboration of intellectuals, artists and individuals in the Mediterranean basin and Arab world. A common problem to the whole area, as pointed out by the Lebanese painter Aref Rayess in a series of newspaper articles, is the lack of rapport and communication, both physical and cultural, between persons in the Arab world. While it is an established pattern for the professional class to receive their higher education in universities in the west and to have travelled extensively in Europe, many of these persons have never set foot in another Arab country. Admittedly, I belonged to this category of persons, until recently in 1967 when the urge to explore both the common and diverse ancient heritage of the area and to see what is being done in the contemporary cultural scene took me to Greece, Turkey, Lebanon, Syria and Morocco. In discussions with intellectuals in these countries, I found that the interest in developing cultural and educational exchange programs and better communication exists. In Lebanon, for example, Cecil Hourani, former cultural advisor to Bourguiba and now a Middle East consultant to the Ford Foundation on cultural affairs, is calling for an inter-Arab conference of architects in Gourni; Aref Rayess the Lebanese painter, is preparing to send an exhibition of Lebanese paintings to Cairo through Dar el Fan; Dr. Samir Thabet, Associate Dean, American University in Beirut, is interested in collaborating with the Center in arranging for exhibitions of Egyptian paintings at AUB; Mrs. Yolande Saad, former proprietor

of Travco travel agency will cooperate with the Center in planning cultural tours for university groups in Lebanon, Syria and Turkey; other young intellectuals, like Miss Lody Aoueiss, who edits Les Cahiers de L'Oronte are interested in making known the poetry and literature of all these countries. Thus there is an awareness among many intellectuals in this area that discovery of one's own heritage and communication with cultural movements of neighbouring countries are enriching and necessary developments.

These, then, are the reasons for the creation of the Center--a Center which is different from other institutes in the UAR in focus and objectives. Its approach to Egyptian civilization is comprehensive i.e. continuity and change (as expressed in art and architecture and folklore) through the Pharaonic, Greco-Roman, Coptic, Islamic and contemporary periods will be a constant perspective. The cultural programs of the center will seek to bridge the gap between the past and the present, between folk art and that of the contemporary artist, between archaeology and living architecture. Unlike other institutes in the UAR, the Center plans programs for educational and cultural institutions in the UAR and abroad, and provides information and documentation services. These include:

#### SEMINARS IN EGYPTIAN CIVILIZATION

These seminars organized for universities abroad give comprehensive surveys of the Pharaonic, Greco-Roman, Coptic, Islamic and contemporary periods. The program includes lectures by eminent university professors, archaeologists, and high ranking government officials on history, art and archaeology and social institutions. A considerable portion of the program will be devoted to on-the-spot field trips to archaeological digs, and visits to contemporary social, cultural and political institutions (six-week programs). This summer Mr. Dorman, Director ARCE, arranged for a group from Upsala College to attend a short ten-day program.

#### LECTURES AND TOURS

The Center organizes a series of lectures and tours for foreign educational institutions in the UAR, in cooperation with the Department of Antiquities. The Center planned a program of tours to Pharaonic, Coptic and Islamic monuments for the American University in Cairo during the academic year 1969-70.

#### EXHIBITIONS

The Center assists educational and cultural institutions in the UAR and abroad in the preparation of exhibitions of contemporary Egyptian art and folk art. The Center will collaborate with Middle East Exhibits and Training in the selection of crafts for exhibit in the U.S.

#### REGIONAL PROGRAMS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN BASIN AND ARAB WORLD

Cultural programs and area study programs will be planned for American and other foreign universities in cooperation with educational institutions in Lebanon,

Turkey, Greece, and Syria and will eventually extend to other countries in the area.

Inquiries on any of the above programs can be addressed to the following mailing address: The Director, 1081 Corniche El Nil, Garden City, Cairo, UAR

#### THE EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY

(In the April, 1970 Newsletter Dr. Nims reported on a scene from the South Wall of a Court at the Temple of Khonsu in Karnak. This article, from the Oriental Institute (University of Chicago) report will give a broader view of the Epigraphic Survey at Luxor.)

Charles Francis Nims, Field Director

From 1960 into the past season the Epigraphic Survey has been engaged in four projects and has been forced to divide its efforts among them.

For the first time in almost a decade the field staff is free to concentrate on a single monument. This is the nearly complete Karnak Temple of Khonsu, the local moon god who was the child in the Theban Triad, whose other members were Amon and Mut.

The construction and decoration of this temple was begun at the rear of the structure in the later years of Ramses III. It stood on the site of an earlier building of which little is known. The wall reliefs executed in the time of

*The Temple of Khonsu, first hypostyle hall (David Larkin in foreground, Carl DeVries on ladder).*



Ramses III and his successor Ramses IV show a syncretism of Khonsu with other gods indicating his increasing importance. The decoration of the temple and perhaps the construction came to a stop with the death of Ramses IV and was not resumed until well into the reign of Ramses XI, about two-thirds of a century later.

The continuing work was under the supervision of the High Priest of Amon Heri-hor. He departed from tradition in a number of scenes in the first hypostyle hall by showing himself rather than the king officiating before the god. By the time the decoration of the court was begun, only a few years later, Heri-hor had proclaimed himself king (perhaps only in Thebes), though Ramses XI was still alive and, indeed, outlived Heri-hor.

In the 1930's and in the three seasons after the Second World War the Epigraphic Survey made records of a considerable area of the walls of the court and first hypostyle hall. With these drawings ready for publication it seemed best to complete the documentation of these two areas at the front of the temple. In the past three seasons, when we have been able to give only part of our time to this project, we have added extensively to our archive of drawings.

The walls of the court were obscured by mud, smoke, and the droppings of birds and bats. In February we were fortunate in being able to obtain the services of Abd-el-Karim Medhat who, until his recent retirement, was the expert in the Department of Antiquities in cleaning temple walls. His excellent work in Nubian temples such as Abu Simbel and Derr strongly recommended him to us. In a month and a half he cleaned the west wall and the west half of the north wall of the court, with unexpected results in revealing the great amount of color still preserved on the reliefs.

The great detail of the painted pattern warns us that the accurate recording of it will take care and time. But as a reward for our painstaking much new information will become available.

In our last report we mentioned that the evidence for the conclusion that the High Priest Piankh was the son of his predecessor Heri-hor is non-existent. We are now able to determine that at least six of the nineteen sons of Heri-hor had names of Libyan origin, a fact not apparent in existing publications. Other previously unnoticed records in the front part of the temple should give us a fuller picture of the last few years of the Twentieth Dynasty.

The expenses of operation and maintenance in the field and the greater part of the expense of travel of the staff were met by a grant from the Smithsonian Institution through the American Research Center in Egypt.

# STAFFING OF THE MAJOR MUSEUMS IN EGYPT

Under Secretary for Antiquities,  
Ministry of Culture

Dr. Gamal Moukhtar

Director-General of Antiquities

Dr. Gamal Mehrez

## EGYPTIAN MUSEUM, CAIRO

Director

Dr. Henry Riad

First Curator  
First Curator  
First Curator  
First Curator

Dr. Abdel Kader Selim  
Dr. Dia Abu Ghazi  
Mr. Gamal Salem  
Dr. Mohie Abdel Latif

Asst. Curator  
Asst. Curator  
Asst. Curator  
Asst. Curator  
Asst. Curator  
Asst. Curator  
Asst. Curator  
Asst. Curator  
Asst. Curator

Mrs. Saniyya Abdelal  
Mrs. Mahasen Nassar  
Mr. Gamal Abdel Hadi ) Couple in  
Mrs. Waf'a Rifaat ) Belgium  
Mr. Said Oman, now in Italy  
Miss Nagwa El Nahri  
Mr. Salah Ramadan  
Mr. Abdel Hadi El Khafif  
Mr. Fathi Khorshid  
Mrs. Soheir El Sawi

## ISLAMIC MUSEUM, CAIRO

Director

Dr. Waffiya Ezzi

First Curator  
First Curator

Mr. Soliman Ahmed Soliman  
Mr. Abdel Raouf Youssef

Asst. Curator  
Asst. Curator  
Asst. Curator  
Asst. Curator  
Asst. Curator  
Asst. Curator  
Asst. Curator  
Asst. Curator  
Asst. Curator

Mrs. Nemat Abu Bakr  
Mrs. Amal Elemary  
Mr. Youssef Salah El Din  
Mr. Khairallah Hussen Khairallah  
Mrs. Maysa Mahmoud  
Miss Insaf Gado  
Miss Fatma Youssef Fahmy  
Mrs. Sayeda Imam Sayed  
Miss Imtissal Abraham

COPTIC MUSEUM, CAIRO

|               |                    |
|---------------|--------------------|
| Director      | Mr. Shafik Farid   |
| First Curator | Mr. Victor Girgis  |
| Asst. Curator | Mr. Mohammed Goma' |
| Asst. Curator | Mr. Abu Salem Bakr |
| Asst. Curator | Mrs. Maha Saleeb   |
| Asst. Curator | Mr. Harbi Galgas   |

GRECO-ROMAN MUSEUM, ALEXANDRIA

|               |                           |
|---------------|---------------------------|
| Director      | Mr. Youssef Hanna Shehata |
| First Curator | Mr. Youssef Gheriani      |
| First Curator | Mrs. Dorea Said           |
| Asst. Curator | Mrs. Samiha Abdel Mounaim |
| Asst. Curator | Mrs. Kausa Helmi          |
| Asst. Curator | Mr. Mahed Attiya          |

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORICAL MUSEUMS

|                  |                               |
|------------------|-------------------------------|
| Director General | Dr. Ahmed Hamdy               |
| Sub Director     | Mr. Soliman Mustapha Ibrahim  |
| Sub Director     | Mr. Abdel Salem Ahmed Ibrahim |
| Sub Director     | Mr. Ali Mohammed Ali Ibrahim  |

Manial Palace Museum, Roda Island

|          |                    |
|----------|--------------------|
| Director | Mr. Maguid Bechara |
| Curator  | Mr. Mohamed Kamel  |

(Nine Assistant Curators)

Abdin Palace Museum

|          |                      |
|----------|----------------------|
| Director | Mr. Adam Selim       |
| Curator  | Mr. Abdel Ati Elaywa |

(Six Assistant Curators)

Pyramid Museum, Giza

|         |                   |
|---------|-------------------|
| Curator | Mr. Rafik Skander |
|---------|-------------------|

(One Assistant Curator)

Gohara Palace Museum, The Citadel

|                            |                         |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Curator                    | Mr. Rageb Tewfik Brahim |
| (Three Assistant Curators) |                         |

"The Corner Museum", Helwan

|                            |                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Curator                    | Mr. Mohammed Ibrahim Osman |
| (Three Assistant Curators) |                            |

The Coaches Museum, Bulac

|                         |                         |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Curator                 | Mr. Mahmoud Farid Fawzi |
| (One Assistant Curator) |                         |

SOME MIRACULOUS WELLS AND SPRINGS OF EGYPT

by Bulbul Abdel Meguid ("Omm Sety")

(Omm Sety, born Dorothy Eady in England, has been fascinated by ancient Egypt and its religion from early years. Her rich knowledge is based on experience of some thirty-five years during which she has become a citizen of Egypt, and worked as secretary and draftswoman in the Antiquities Department with the late Professor Selim Hassan and Professor Ahmed Fakhry, and at Abydos.)

Probably every country in the ancient and modern world has its mystic wells or springs, and certainly Egypt is no exception. The wells or springs best known to Europeans and Americans in Egypt are those of Helwan, and the so-called Joseph's Well at the Citadel, Cairo, and Moses' Well in the Mokkatam Hills, on the way to the Petrified Forest. Inspired dragomans try to kid the gullible that the well in the Citadel is the actual one in which Joseph's unpleasant brethren put him until they could find a good customer to buy him. However, this well, which is a remarkable engineering feat, was really named after the famous Salah el Din, one of whose names was Yousef (Joseph). As for the Well of Moses, its name is pure invention, as according to the Biblical story it was in the desert of Sinai that Moses struck the rock and got an instant water supply.

THE VIRGIN'S WELL

The Virgin's Well at Materialah is also well known, and may be ancient. It is beside the extremely old sycamore tree under which, according to local tradition, the Holy Family rested when they first arrived in Egypt after their flight from Herod. At that time the well was said to be brackish, but after Mary had washed the clothes of the infant Jesus in it, its waters became sweet and potable, and have remained so until the present day.

### AIN SEIRA

Near the Imam el Shafi Cemetery at the Citadel is now a small lake known as Ain el Seira. It lies in what is now a low-lying part of the cemetery (originally perhaps a quarry). The water, green in colour and so full of salt that even a non-swimmer can float upon it like a cork, is supposed to contain sulphur. It has a great reputation among the more old-fashioned Egyptians as a cure for almost any kind of illness, from rheumatism to skin diseases.

According to tradition, the Ain Seira came into existence in a very curious way. A certain Moslem lady of good family, a pilgrim to Mecca, had been known all her life for her pious and charitable character. When she died, she was buried in a fine tomb in the lower part of the Imam el Shafi Cemetery. The day after the funeral, her mourning relatives went to visit her grave, only to find water flowing from it, and collecting in a small depression in the ground, forming a small pool. Later, a wall was constructed around this pool, transforming it into a well.

The water did not cease to flow, and very soon the whole of the low-lying part of the cemetery, including of course, the tomb of the lady, became submerged.

It was not long before the medicinal properties of the water were discovered, and sick persons began to flock there in search of a cure.

The procedure is thus: On arrival, the patient strips completely naked, and an attendant, called the Servant of the Well, scoops up some very bad-smelling black mud from the bottom of the pool and plasters the patient with it from head to foot, including even the face. The muddied one now has to sit in the sun until the mud becomes dry, cracks and begins to flake off. The patient then descends into the water and washes off the remainder, and then waits until the sun and air have dried him, or her. Drying with a towel is supposed to hinder the good work of the treatment.

The circular rim of the original well can still be seen, just above the surface of the water, and it is claimed that if a barren woman walks around it seven times, she will surely become pregnant.

In the year 1937 I went to Ain Seira in company with three young English Sisters from the Kasr El Aini Hospital. We were not ill but went out of curiosity, just to see what it was like. At that time the whole of the lake was entirely surrounded by an old, rickety wall of wooden planks, which was supposed to ensure privacy. A similar wall (full of knot-holes!) stretched across the lake, dividing it into two halves (His and Hers!) On paying the entrance fee of five piasters, we entered the ladies section, where we found a raised board-walk onto which opened small cubicles. Here, we undressed, and then handed ourselves over to the good offices of the Servant of the Pool. This amiable lady, who closely resembled the Goddess Taurt, was clad in a black head scarf, decorated with beads, and a pair of heavy silver anklets. Swiftly and methodically she gave us all a thorough coating of this horrible, smelly black mud, and then we wandered around the board-walk, waiting for it to dry. At this time a funeral was taking place in the higher part of the cemetery.

When the mud had dried, we all plunged into the water to wash off the traces. We found it almost impossible to swim in it, as we simply lay on the surface, as though on a mattress. One of the girls climbed onto the rim of the well and began to dance around on it. The servant of the Well asked me if she was married but childless, and said that if so, she would certainly bear a child now. I called out this news to the girl, and she gave a wild yell of pretended terror, and fell off into the water, to our great and noisy amusement. Suddenly I looked up, and saw that the funeral was assuming a much more cheerful aspect. In fact, we had completely "stolen the show" from the corpse! Although it is a good deed to cheer the sorrowful, we quickly re-entered our cubicles, got into a more seemly attire, and beat a hasty retreat.

As none of us were ill, we cannot say from experience whether this treatment had any real value, but there are plenty of cases known where people have been cured by it, of both eczema and rheumatic pains.

### THE WELL OF SHEIK EL KHODARI

In a small dark room attached to the Sheik El Khodari Mosque, in the Souk el Silah, Cairo is a deep but narrow well. Its water, apparently only normal fresh water, and very cool and pleasant to drink on a hot day, is also said to be a cure for eye diseases.

This well used to be in the charge of an elderly woman, known as the Servant of the Sheik. When sufferers from eye-trouble went to her, she sat them down on a large stone beside the well and told them to hold their heads back. Then she dipped up some of the well-water with her hand and let it drip into the patient's eyes. The patient then washed his or her face in the well-water. Obstinate cases sometimes required a second visit. Payment for the treatment was a small tip to the Servant of the Sheik.

### THE WELL AT NEZLET EL SEMMAN

In the Moslem Cemetery at Nezlit el Semman, at the foot of the Pyramids of Giza, is a deep and ancient well in a grove of very old sycamore trees. For most of the year the water of this well is clear and drinkable, but during the time of the inundation, it becomes milky, and if drunk, has the effects of a very strong purge. Some of the inhabitants of the village use it for this purpose, but others are afraid of its effects, and even say people have been known to die after drinking it. No one is able to explain why the water changes its appearance and character.

### THE BASIN OF SAINT GEORGE

The old Church of Saint George (Mari Girgis) in Old Cairo is constructed in a bastion of a Roman castle. The church is in the upper part of the tower, and the lower part, once used as a crypt, is now permanently flooded with water.

Stapled into the wall of the upper chamber are two heavy iron chains, and in front of them is a stone column, about one meter high, on which is fixed a stone basin. The latter measures about 40 cms. in diameter and is about 25 cms. deep. There is always some clear water filling this basin to a little over a quarter of its depth. The chains are said to have been used by St. George to tie up his horse (they look strong enough to have tied up the dragon!), but they were really probably used to shackle prisoners in the tower.

Persons sick of some malady that ordinary doctors have been unable to treat often come to this place to get help from St. George. First of all they drink some of the water in the stone basin, using a brass cup that is kept chained to its rim. Then the person in charge of the room (in 1954 it was a young man with a face like a Byzantine painting of a saint) wraps the two chains around the patient, pinioning the arms and legs, and all the while reciting prayers. This is done three times in the names of the Trinity. He then gathers up the ends of the chain and waves them to and fro over the patient's head, and the ceremony is complete.

This treatment is also used for persons suspected of being possessed by an evil spirit.

The curious point about this is that the water in the basin always returns (and quickly) to its original level, although there is no visible pipe or spout through which it could come.

#### THE WELL OF THE OSIRION AT ABYDOS

In the north-eastern side chamber opening out of the great Central Hall of the Osirion at Abydos, is a rectangular well, formed by the removal of one of the paving blocks in the floor of the chamber. The water in it is so clear and transparent as to be almost invisible.

This well used to be much visited by women who wished to have children. They would enter the small, low-pitched room, splash themselves with the water, and also drink some of it.

An American lady friend of mine who had been childless for twelve years decided to test the power of this well. Sure enough, nine months later she became the delighted mother of a little daughter, although several gynecologists had told her that she would never be able to bear a child!

When I visited Abydos in 1952 I was unable to read or write without glasses. Prompted by a sudden idea, I washed my eyes in the water of this well, and from that day to this, have never used my glasses again. I told this to the wife of one of the Inspectors of the Antiquities Department, who was suffering from an eye disease, said to be incurable, which prevented her from opening her eyes in a strong light. Although she did not believe me, her husband persuaded her to try the water of the well, and she did so. Less than half an hour later, while we were walking over the desert to go to the Temple of Ramesses II, she suddenly cried out, "I can open my eyes!" And sure enough, she could. Moreover, the cure was permanent.

A fifteen-month-old child, suffering from epilepsy, was given some of this water to drink. Four years have passed, and the child is well and strong and has had no more fits.

Unfortunately since a recent irrigation project in the district was finished and the area transformed from basin to perennial system of irrigation, the surface of the Central Hall of the Osirion as well as all its chambers are flooded all the year round, instead of, as formerly, from the end of October to the beginning of March. The well and its chamber are now inaccessible, and the water is mixed with the subsoil water, much to the annoyance of the local would-be mothers!

It is strange that the local people do not know of the curative properties of this well, but consider it only as a kind of fertility charm.

In ancient Abydos there was a well called "The Well of Roarings", but its location is unknown now. People used to throw offerings in it and pray for some boon; apparently it was a wishing well. Sometimes the well in the Osirion makes a deep, gurgling sound; maybe this is the Well of Roarings, but of this there is no proof.

#### THE WELL IN THE PALM GROVE

In a palm grove near the Temple of Sety I at Abydos was a very old well that once supplied water to a water-wheel. This well had a rather mixed reputation. Some people swore that it was haunted by evil spirits, but it was also said to cure barrenness. In this case, the water itself was not drunk, but the woman who wanted a child had to run around the well seven times and then jump across it. It was only about one meter wide, but the women always took the precaution of holding onto a strong stick or rope held by a companion! As several accidents happened, of children falling into the well and drowning, and as it was no longer used for irrigation, the local police ordered the owner of the palm grove to have it filled in; it is now only a depression scarcely one meter deep, and dry. It is no longer used as a fertility charm, but is still feared as a haunt of evil spirits.

#### THE TANK OF SHEIK EL MIGDIM

About half a kilometer to the north-east of the Temple of Ramesses II at Abydos, stands the Mosque of Sheik El Migdim. In the place where the worshippers wash before praying, is a large tank built of ancient Roman red bricks. This is kept filled with water, and used by any person who wants to take a bath in it. But it also has another use.

The water in this tank is said to cure all kinds of boils, abscesses and carbuncles. To obtain a cure, the patient must go to the mosque on a Friday, and attend the mid-day prayers. After the service is ended, he goes to the tank and immerses himself in its water. Many cures are effected by one immersion, but obstinate cases may take as long as three Fridays to complete.

This tank is also used in cases of shock, especially in young children, or for the cure of babies who are not thriving as they should. Although not required to attend the service, these small patients are taken to the mosque on Fridays, and plunged quickly into the tank, being completely submerged, they naturally come up gasping and screaming; truly a case of "shock treatment".

#### THE STONE OF SHEIK AMAR

At the Mosque of Sheik Amar, at Balyana, near Abydos, is a large flat stone, and near it an earthenware basin of water. This water was once always drawn from the well of the mosque, but now comes from the Government public taps!

Sick children are taken to the mosque, undressed and laid upon the stone. A woman, also a servant of the Sheik, washes the child, and it is then dressed in a change of clothing, which its mother has brought with her.

This is regarded as a "kill or cure" operation, and is only resorted to when a child is apparently hopelessly ill. After the treatment, the children are said to recover quickly, or die before the following day. Rather surprisingly, quite a number do survive!

Some women, after the child has been re-clothed, take the cast off garments and throw them in the Nile, perhaps an echo of a custom of offering to the Nile-god, Hapi. But there is some controversy about this; some women say that it is not necessary, while others go so far as to say that it is definitely "not done".

#### THE WELL OF SHEIK KHALAFALLAH

At the village of Nag Abu Khalafallah, near Abu Tisht, in the Kena Province, is the Mosque of Sheik Abu Khalafallah. This mosque boasts of a well called "Beir el Awafi" ("The Well of Health"), which has a very wide reputation of being able to cure almost any known disease, plus a lot of others, supposed to be caused by evil spirits! The procedure is similar to that of the Stone of Sheik Amar. The patient (child or adult) goes to the well, taking with him a change of clothing.

Arriving at the well, the patient strips, and placing on the ground the cast off clothing, stands upon the garments, while he washes himself with water drawn from the well. When he has finished, he puts on the clean clothing which he has brought. Some take the dirty clothes away with them, while others leave them lying on the ground, but this is optional.

In the case of these wells attached to mosques, if the patient is not cured, his reaction and that of his family is "God did not wish it." To this, I always reply that perhaps God would prefer them to go and get free scientific treatment at the many country hospitals which the Government has provided especially for their welfare!

### NOTES ON ACTIVITIES IN THE U.A.R.

#### Department of Antiquities

Dr. Waffiya Ezzi, formerly First Curator, has assumed her duties as Director of the Islamic Museum, replacing Dr. Ahmed Hamdy.

The Department of Historical Museums, formerly under the Ministry of Tourism, has recently been transferred to the Ministry of Culture and is now part of the Department of Antiquities. The new Director General of Historical Museums, who assumed his duties in September, is Dr. Ahmed Hamdy, formerly Director of the Islamic Museum, Cairo. In his new position, Dr. Hamdy is responsible for the administration of six museums representing Cairo during the last hundred years: the Manial Palace Museum, Roda Island; the Abdin Palace Museum; the Pyramid Museum, Giza; The Gohara Palace Museum at the Citadel; the "Corner Museum", Helwan; and the Coaches Museum, Bulac. The last of these museums, which contains ninety coaches as well as the liveries of the drivers, outriders and footmen, is not yet open to the public. It is probable that at least a part of the Ras el Tin Palace in Alexandria, now used as a guest-house for visiting dignitaries, will be converted into a museum which will also be administered by the Department of Historical Museums.

Early this year the Department of Antiquities in Cairo announced that a new inspectorate had been created called the 'Inspectorate of Mansura and Damietta'. This is in Daqahaliya province where Mendes is located. The inspector is Mr. Abdel Halim Rizq.

Director General of Antiquities Dr. Gamal Moukhtar attended a UNESCO conference in France for three weeks this summer and later visited Poland and Italy.

#### Other

Construction on the new building which will ultimately house the collections of the Dar al-Kutub and will be the National Library of the U.A.R. is proceeding according to schedule. Several administrative offices including that of Dr. Mahmud Shaniti, Under Secretary for State Archives in the Ministry of Culture, have been moved into the new facility. The new building is a large complex and will provide stack space for some five million volumes and manuscripts. There will be well-illuminated reading rooms and special sections for manuscript editing, acquisitions, and cataloguing, including a computer project to reorganize the present system of catalogues. The new building is located on the Eastern Corniche of the Nile, approximately one-half mile north of the 26 of July Street Bridge. Dr. Shaniti hopes to begin the move of books and manuscripts from the old building during October 1971. Until that time, the collection will be available to scholars in the old facility.

# THE CENTER'S GUEST BOOK

Among our first visitors to sign in during June was Miss Jean L. Keith, of Columbia University, originally selected as an ARCE Fellow for 1970/71 but spending three months in Egypt under other auspices, cataloguing and interpreting herms in the Egyptian, Coptic and Greco-Roman Museums. Dr. Ian Rolff of the Smithsonian Astrophysical Laboratory in Cambridge, Massachusetts, called at the Center to discuss the Smithsonian-supported project relating to the possible astral orientation of the Karnak complex. Dr. Louis Zabkar, now on the faculty of Brandeis University and an old friend of the Center, dropped in to sample our coffee while en route from the Sudan to the States. The Reverend Mathias Zahniser, from Johns Hopkins University, and Mr. Craig Warner, from Los Angeles, called. Our Egyptian visitors to the Center during June included Mr. Shafik Farid, director of the Coptic Museum, Mrs. Yousria Yousri, Director of Tourism in Luxor, and Dr. Rafla Naggar, who had recently completed his studies in France and hoped soon to leave for the States. Our last visitor in June was Professor William Kelly Simpson, a member of our Board of Governors.

Our visitors during July were few: Dr. Edward Terrace, who had just returned from a trip to the States, and Mr. and Mrs. William Peck; Mr. Peck is Curator of Ancient Art at the Detroit Institute of Arts, and will return to Cairo in a few months on a 1970-71 ARCE grant.

During August Mr. Michael Van Vleck, ARCE 1970-71 Fellow, and his wife checked in at the Center as did Dr. Bernard Weiss, Assistant Professor of History at the AUC and also an ARCE 1970-71 Fellow. Dr. Bryant Wedge, Director of the Institute of the Study of National Behavior in San Diego, California, called at the Center with his wife, Dr. Vivian Wedge, born in Alexandria, an anthropologist currently on the faculty of San Diego State University. Dr. Marvin Zonis, from the Center of Near Eastern Studies at Chicago, and Mr. Russell Y. Smith, of Ohio State University now teaching at the AUC, visited the Center. Public media representatives calling at the Center for briefings during August included Mr. Alan L. Heil Jr., VOA, Middle East Bureau in Athens, and Miss Lucy Salenger, CBS News, Los Angeles. Finally, Miss Lisa Cook, Administrative Assistant of the Centennial Office of the Metropolitan Museum, and Dr. Francis Peters, Department of Philosophy at New York University and 1968-69 ARCE Fellow, and his wife Mary, stopped in to renew acquaintances.

مركز البحوث الشرقية بالقاهرة

٢ ميدان قصر الدوبارة - جاردن سيتي

تليفون رقم ٣٣٠٥٢ - ٢٧٦٢٨ - القاهرة ج.ع.م.

Collège de France  
Égyptologie



2025 642

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

The University of Chicago is a private research university in Chicago, Illinois. It was founded in 1837 as the first American university to be organized on the European model, with a focus on research and scholarship. The university has a long history of academic excellence and has produced many notable alumni, including several Nobel laureates. It is known for its rigorous academic standards and its commitment to intellectual freedom. The university's campus is located in the Hyde Park neighborhood of Chicago and covers an area of approximately 1,000 acres. It is home to over 10,000 students and over 3,000 faculty members. The university's research is conducted in a wide range of fields, including the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities. It is also known for its commitment to public service and its efforts to address the needs of the community.

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During the 19th century, the University of Chicago was one of the leading universities in the United States. It was known for its commitment to research and scholarship and its rigorous academic standards. The university's faculty included many of the leading scholars of the time, and its students were known for their intellectual achievements. The university's research was conducted in a wide range of fields, including the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities. It was also known for its commitment to public service and its efforts to address the needs of the community. The university's campus is located in the Hyde Park neighborhood of Chicago and covers an area of approximately 1,000 acres. It is home to over 10,000 students and over 3,000 faculty members. The university's research is conducted in a wide range of fields, including the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities. It is also known for its commitment to public service and its efforts to address the needs of the community.

1906-1907

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